FAMI-LORE

A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN FOLK LORE

AMERICAN SQUARE - DANCE GROUP

MARGOT MAYO

LEADER

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MAY ISSUE

"PROMENADE"

"Official organ of the American Square Dance Group"
"The purpose of the American Square Dance Group shall be to make available those rich store of native dance, music, drama, and general Americana which togethercomprise American Folk Culture; to conduct such activities without regard for race, creed, coloror socail position; to cooperate with those who hold similar views."
A.S.D.G. Constitution

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ART-SINGER VERSUS FOLK-SINGER

Many problems arise during the evaluation of the work of artists who have devoted their lives to their chosen fields. One must have a set of standards by which to judge such work, for one can not plow headlong into these creative endeavors. One must tread gently for dreams are fragile and are frequently destroyed by careless criticism.

Recently a member of the A.S.D.G. tremblingly admitted to me that she liked the sings and singing of a certain folk-lorist, but hated to say so since many of friends spoke disparagingly of his work. This gave me pause for thought, and I should like to share with you some of these thoughts, not as conclusions, but merely as suggestions for you to build upon.

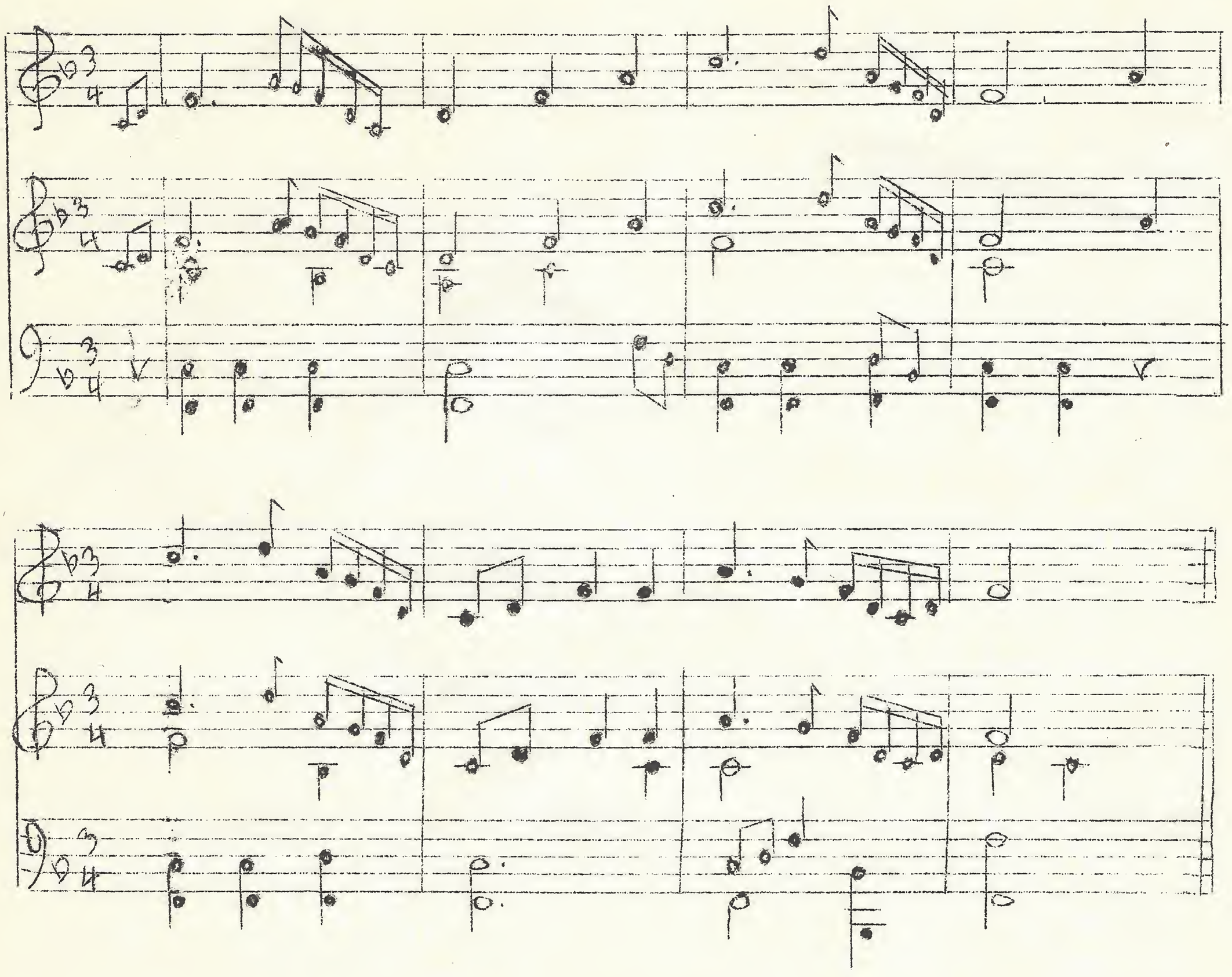
Wherein lies the difference between "art-song" and "folk-song", between "art-singer "and "folk-singer"? Since some composed songs have become so popular as to be mistaken for folk-songs, cannot folk songs, in turn, become art songs by means of intricate arrangements and manner of presentation? What do we mean when we say, "It's very nice, but it isn't folk singing "?

By authentic folk singing we naturally mean the singing of untrained, simple, every-day people, who sing merely for the pleasure of singing. But we in the city seldom have an opportunity to hear thses singers, since they are the farmers, miners, mill workers, lumberman and other workers who are the folk of our country. There are many musicians who are doing splendid work in collectiong and popularizing folk songs and are well known for their recordings, recitals and broadcasts of American folk music. When you listen to these musicians you will have to do just what I am trying to do now. Decide for yourself whether or not you consider the songs authentic and the singing "folky". Then remember that you justifiably like even the overdone and doctered up songs for themselves simply as lovely songs, not necessarily as folk songs. Or if the singer is inclined to smother the sings with his own "personality", perhaps you will generous enough to forgive him. Unfortunately, I am too frequently "un-generous".

LORD I'M JOURNEYING HOMEWARD

(collected by Alan Swartz, in Alabama)

This song was sung to Alan by William Sternwill of Bowling Green, Ky.



Lord I'm journeying homeward, Lord I'm journeying home
Lord I never more will wander, Lord I never more will roam.

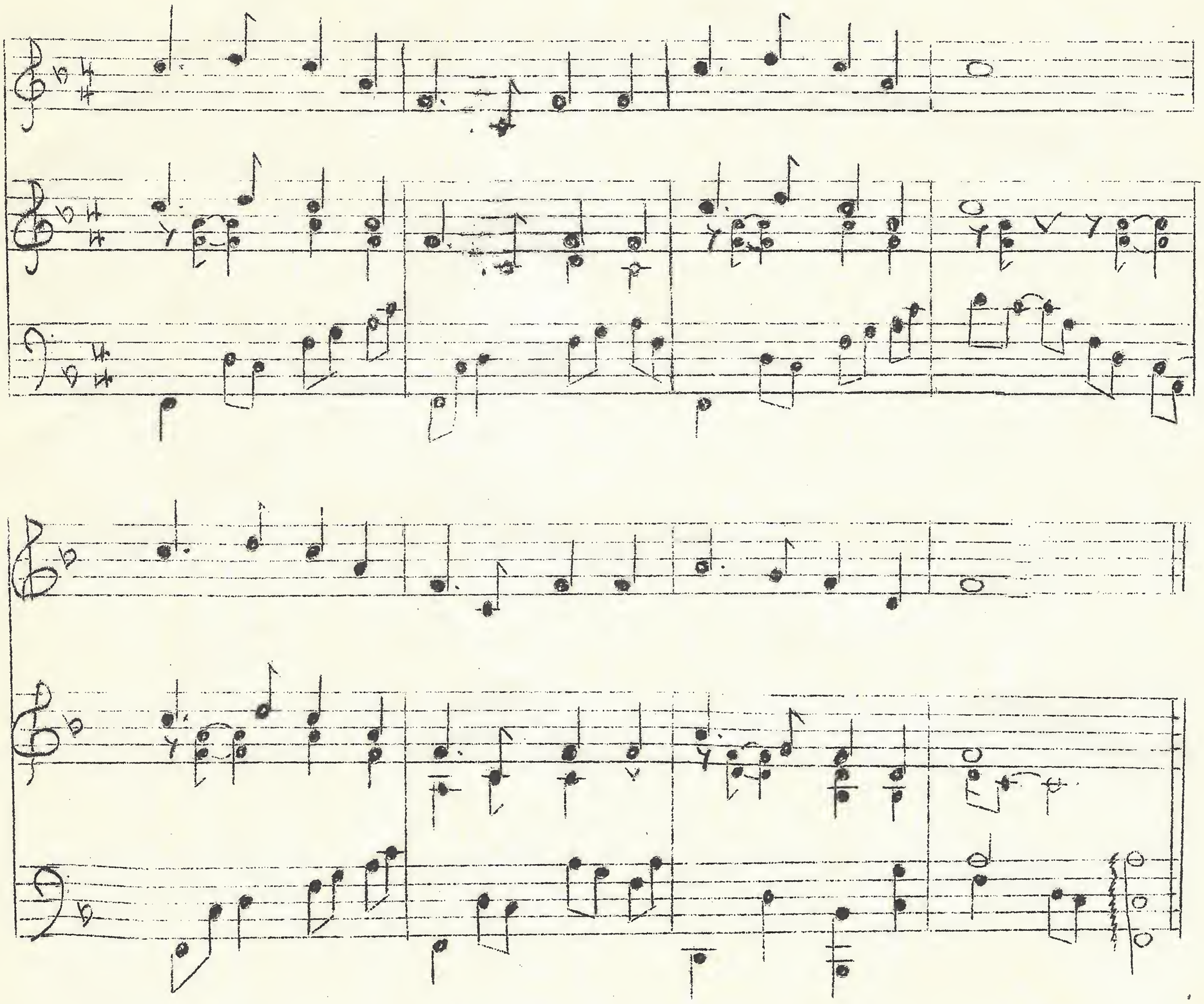
Lord I traveled a long ways, Lord I served my time.
Lord, I've given up my bad ways, Lord I'll go no more to crime.

Lord, I've left the gal that loved me, Lord I never said goodbye
Lord if she done love another, Lord I wish that I would die.

Lord I'm gonna bear my sorrow, Lord I'm weary as can be
Lord, If ever I'm a-journeying, Lord it's you I've come to see.

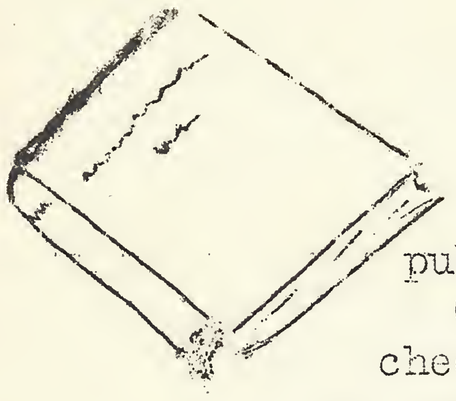
A SINGLE QUESTION
(collected by Alan Swartz in Alabama)

This song is very popular today among the men of our armed forces in the South. It was sung to Alan by aviation cadet John E. McCall of Ashville, N.C.



Answer me a single question
Let me restful be
Will you love me when you've left me
When you're o'er the sea?

Here's my answer to your question
I will love you true
I will miss the times I've kissed you
When I'm far from you.



BOOK REVIEWS

FATHER OF THE BLUES...autobiography of W.C.Handy published by Macmillan Co.N.Y.1941

One reads this book with pride in one's heart and shame in one's cheeks! Proud that a fellow American human being could accomplish so much with so little,and ashamed that any fellow human being should be forced to undergo the humiliations with which the white race has persistantly hampered the Negro people.To read a book of this kind,written by a superb musician,a great gentleman and a genuine person,and to me,a painful one,for it is a monument of pride,courage,determination and self-confidence. There is a quiet dignity in this book,a sure faith,and a sincere feeling for humanity. There is,thank Heavens, no sign of servility or humility here,but rather,a true Christian spirit which provokes thought with a capital T. W.C.Handy is a great musician,a great humanitarian and a great man.He will be remembered for his contribution to American music,as the man who brought to its highest climax,a particular type of native music. But for those of us who have had the opportunity of coming in contact with Mr. Handy,the man, he will be remembered,humbly,for his contribution to genuine ,decent humanity! This book is a must for the sincere student of Americana.

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SONGS OF YESTERDAY....compiled by Philip D.Jorden and Lilian Kessler...Doublday,Doran &Co.Inc.

In this book"Songs of Yesterday" the authors "have tried to keep the flavor of old music by reproducing the actual songs themselves-hence the occasional broken type."

Some of the early American song writers,such as Henry Clay Work,Stephen Foster,Henry Russell,George Root and others are represented in this collection of songs. Under such headings as "Fine Ladies and Gentlemen","Songs of the Ballot" "Oh,I Should Like to Marry," "A Is for Apple","Back of Beyond","The Land of Pork and Beans",and "Liberty Forever" are found songs of almost every phase of life at that time,with such titles as,"Broadway Lights",Fremont Campaign" "The Bachelor Lament","Jolly Irishman","Little Charlie Wenta-Fishing" and many more.

I found the "broken type " quite confusing but I do think that the book would be of value to music teachers and small chorus groups as well. However, I do think thatthe book could have been just as attractive and much more useful, had the authors rewritten the words and music and presented them uniformly throughout the book,explaining that in the original form they were a little hard to read.

The authors,in compiling this book used so many pamphlets,diaries, letters and single sheet music,it would have been impossible to have listed them in a single bibliography but they have selected a list of American songsters which might prove interesting to the student of American music.

"Try These Over On Your Piano". On the back cover of the book are strains of four songs with the complete songs in the book. Why not try them over on your piano?

BUTTERFLY WHIRL

(collected by Mike Rohman at a square dance in Great Barrington, Mass.....Junior Division, A.S.D.G.)

Formation: square set
Music: Golden Slippers
Calls:

"circle eight hands round"

I) head couple up the set.....left hand turn with opposite
2) head couple separate...lady to the right, gent to the left outside the set
3) balance to corners
4) balance to partners
5) swing your corner
6) promenade around the set

Description:

I) Head couple join inside hands and walk across the set, hook left elbows with opposite(lady with gentand the active gent with the opposite lady) turn once around.
2) Head couple separate, the lady going to her rightaround the outside of the set and the gent going to his left, all the way back to place.
3) Bow to your corners (the lady on each of the gent's left hand side)
4) Bow to your partners
5) Swing your corner
6) Promenade.....when the call comes to promenade you keep on swinging your corner moving all the way around the set in a counterclockwise direction until you reach your original place in the set.

(this dance is done with only the first and second couples. The remaining two couples can do Duck for the Oyster or any other dance the caller happens to think of at the moment.)

BEER BARREL POLKA

(collected by Gene Levitt at a square dance in South Landsing, N.Y.)

Formation: square set
Music: first part of dance use Little Brown Jug or a similar polka-like tune; for chorus use a full chorus of Beer Barrel Polka.
Introduction: circle right half way, then back to the left.

Calls: I) first couple down the center, lady go right , gent go left.
2) circle three on the sides
3) polka do-si-do
4) allemande left with the lady, allemande right with the gent
allemande left with the lady, allemande right with the gent
5) active couple swing in the center of the set

Chorus: allemande left, grand right and left twice around the set

repeat from (I) through chorus three times , so that each couple can be active in turn.

note: calls from 2 through 4 are performed with the first gent dancing with the fourth couple and the first lady with the second couple.

Description:

I) The first couple moves across the set, passing between couple three, the active lady turns to her right moves around outside the squarewhile the active gent turns to his left and moves around the outside. The active lady steps into set and joins hands with couple two while her partner joins hands with couple four. Thus you have two small circles of three dancers on each side of the set and couple three is still standing in their original place.

2) Both circles in sets of three, circle left.

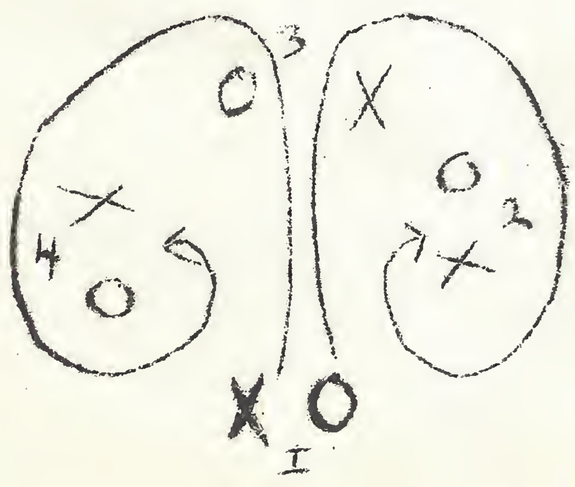
3) Both circles change places (constantly circling left) using a polka step. The set in the second couple's place moves across the set , passing to the right of the other set. When each circle of three reaches the opposite side of the set and each circle returns to place, passing, this time, on the other side of the set.

4) The active couples perform the following simultaneously. Each joins left hands with the lady, turns her once around, then joins right hands with the gentand turns once around. This is repeated .

5) Active couple swings in the center, swinging into place.

chorus:

All dancers face their corners, join left hands and turn once around, then face partners, giving right hands. Continue around the ring, alternating hands. After reaching original places once you keep on going around the set in the same direction a second time.



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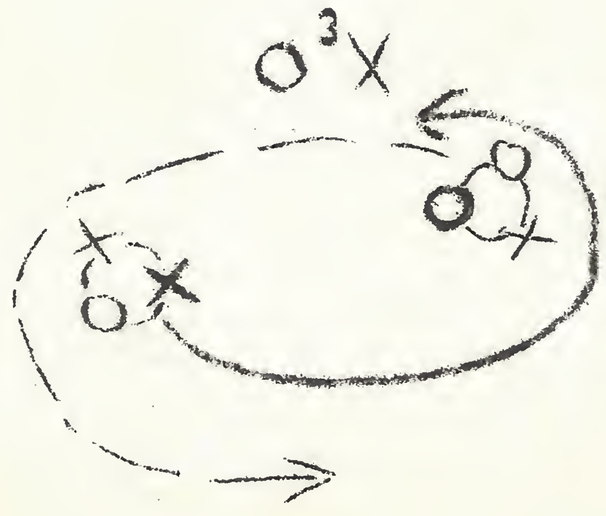
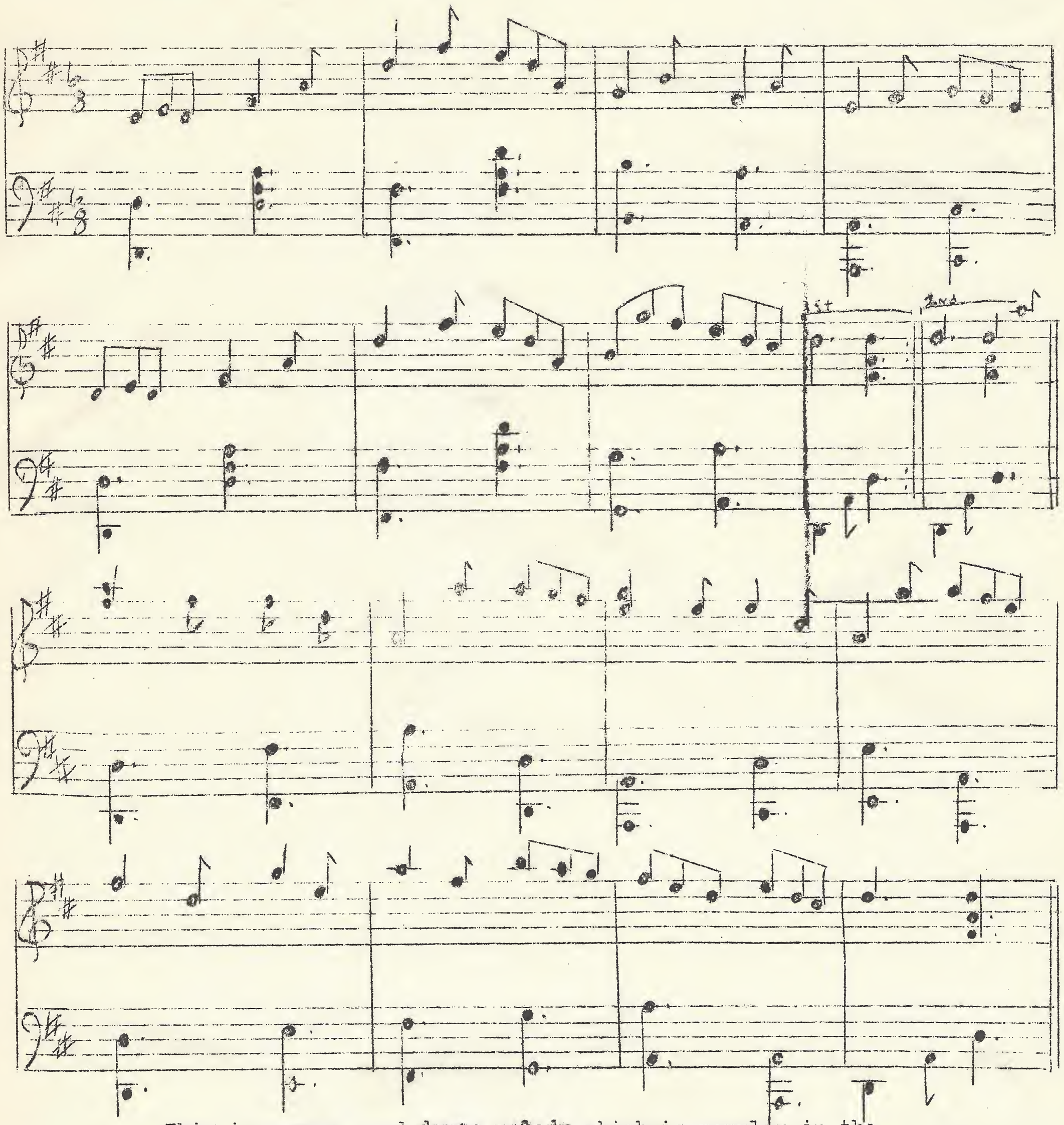


3)

SMASH THE WINDOWS

(arranged by Margot Mayo)



This is a very good dance melody which is popular in the Adirondack region of New York State. We have discovered that it fits very nicely to the Quadrille in our previous issue of Promenade.